

**Relationships Between Age and Legislative Opinion
On Higher Education Issues**

An Honors Thesis (ID 499)

by

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I. Review of Current Literature

The literature on higher education policy formation has focused on the conflicts between legislators and academicians. Academic institutions are motivated to become the best educational and research facilities possible.¹ These aspirations are no different than those of any other sector of the bureaucracy in that they require large amounts of state appropriations. The state appropriations can be used for better faculty retention and research facilities, leading to a higher quality institution. The conflict arises when the legislature appropriates state funds to meet their constituencies many needs - with education being only one.² This conflict has at times put Indiana higher education in a frustrating situation. In 1981, George B. Weathersby, Commissioner of Higher Education in Indiana, said, "The alacrity with which governments avoid politically difficult decisions, such as school closings, leaves me with little hope for effective state governance of higher education in the future."³

In an effort to better resolve this conflict, several studies have attempted to reveal legislators' attitudes towards higher education. A Eulare and Quinley study showed legislators to take a great deal of pride in their faculties.⁴ The legislators were split on the adequacy of faculty salaries, but almost all felt the faculty work load was to low. Most legislators also felt teaching should take

priority over research. Our research will attempt to gather information on legislators' views on a wider range of issues such as access, management, finance, and others.

Although useful knowledge has been obtained regarding the general attitudes of legislators towards education, little is known about the role of demographic variables in the formation of these attitudes. Past studies have been conducted concerning the effects of socioeconomic variables on other policy issues.⁵ This literature generally focuses on the per capita income, urbanization, and industrialization of the legislative district. The study of the demographic variable of legislator occupation has been quite extensive, particularly the examination of lawyers. These studies indicate that lawyers' attitudes towards most policy issues do not vary from those of nonlawyers and that lawyers generally do not vote together as a bloc.⁶ However, on some issues, such as "no fault" insurance proposals in Congress and state legislatures, lawyers will vote together to protect the legal profession.⁷

This study will attempt to find any relationship between the demographic variable of age and state legislators' views on higher education policy. Although it is apparent that the length of legislative service is becoming less important in Congress,⁸ little is known about the effect of age on policy views. It is hypothesized that age, like occupation, will have little effect on the views of Indiana state legislators on higher education.

This study will attempt to fill a knowledge gap by isolating on which issues, if any, legislative views are impacted by age. With the increasing emphasis being placed on fiscal responsibility in government, the conflict between legislators and academicians will continue. The knowledge of the views of younger legislators will be useful in evaluating how much value the next generation of political leadership will place on higher education. Furthermore, the evaluation of these views may indicate future changes in the higher education system and its impact on our society.

II. Format Of Research

A. Selection of Research Method

A survey approach to the research was chosen in order to facilitate the efficient gathering of reliable data on legislator attitudes. The survey method allowed a number of higher education issues to be addressed without the expense of a large time commitment. An alternative method considered was observing the legislative process and collecting samples of speeches, votes, and motions as data reflecting legislator attitudes toward higher education. This method would have required great time and effort without generating reliable data. Personal interviews were also considered as a method to generate data. However, the time commitment to complete this method was larger than desired, and the reliability of the data was no greater than could be achieved through the survey method.

B. Selection of Survey Questions

The survey was aimed at identifying legislative opinions on the current state of higher education, the issues higher education faces, and the future of higher education. The relevant issues facing higher education were identified through a review of current higher education periodicals and publications. Fifty-three questions were assembled to address the following key topics:

1. General Attitude Towards Higher Education
2. Transfer of Credit
3. Student Fees and Finance
4. Assessment
5. Access
6. Admissions
7. Management
8. Structure of Management
9. Faculty
10. Academic Program

The majority of the questions were presented in a format in which the respondent was instructed "For each of the statements below indicate if you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree." In addition, the legislators were asked to rank the importance of a number of issues, one of which was higher education. Four other questions were asked including the identification of the most important issue currently facing higher education.

A demographic profile of the legislator was also recorded. Included in this profile were the following characteristics:

1. Age
2. Race
3. Sex
4. Party
5. Years of Legislative Service
6. Committee Experience
7. College Education
8. Existence of Higher Education Institute in District
9. Urban Nature of County
10. Occupation

C. Administration of the Survey

A preliminary letter introducing myself and the purpose of the survey was mailed by Dr. Perry to all members of the Indiana State Legislature. The initial administration of the

survey was a mailing to all 150 Indiana State Legislators. Responses were mailed back to Ball State University from fifty-six legislators. Each survey and legislator were assigned a corresponding number to assist in the recording of data and the identification of participating legislators. Legislators who did not respond to the initial mailing were solicited again personally at the Indiana State House. Legislators were asked to complete the survey and either return it by mail or leave it with the chamber secretaries. Another eighteen responses were obtained through this method, for a total sample of seventy-four.

D. Demographic Profile of the Sample

The sample accurately reflected the composition of the population on four major demographic variables: race, party, sex, and years of legislative service. There was also little difference in the composition of the sample compared to the composition of the population in regards to the level of education and the urban nature of the home county variables. Accurate figures for the breakdown of the population into the two age categories were not be obtained, but it is believed that the sample fairly represents the age breakdown of the population. Overall, the survey method of gathering the data has produced a sample that reflects the demographic composition of population. There is no reason to believe that the respondent sample favors a particular orientation or point of view. For a display of the demographic composition

of the sample compared to the demographic composition of the population see Table 1.

TABLE 1

Demographic Composition of Sample
Compared to
Demographic Composition of Population

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLE	POPULATION 150 LEGISLATORS		SAMPLE 74 RESPONDENTS	
	NO.	%	NO.	%
RACE				
White	142	94.7	70	95.9
Black	8	5.3	3	4.1
No Response			1	-
PARTY				
Republican	76	50.7	38	52.8
Democrat	74	49.3	34	47.2
No Response			2	-
SEX				
Male	128	85.3	66	91.7
Female	22	14.7	6	8.3
No Response			2	
YRS. OF LEG. SERVICE				
0 - 3	32	21.3	18	24.7
4 - 7	37	24.7	16	21.9
8 or more	81	54.0	39	53.4
No Response			1	-
COLLEGE EDUCATION				
None	24	16.0	10	13.7
Some College	24	16.0	15	20.5
College Degree	31	20.7	17	23.3
Post-grad. Degree	71	47.3	31	42.5
No Response			1	-
URBAN NATURE OF HOME COUNTY (POPULATION)				
Less than 50,000	46	30.7	20	27.0
50,000 to 100,000	24	16.0	16	21.6
100,000 to 250,000	34	22.7	14	18.9
More than 250,000	46	30.7	24	32.4
AGE				
Under 45			21	28.8
45 and Older			52	71.2
No Response			1	-

III. General Attitudes of Legislators

Based on their responses to survey questions, the following are the opinions of the Indiana state legislators concerning several higher education issues. The strongly agree and agree categories were combined to total the positive responses, as were the strongly disagree and disagree categories to total the negative responses.

A. General

Questions in this area attempt to obtain the opinions of the legislators on the overall past performance, present state, and future of higher education.

The large majority of legislators believed that Indiana higher education is on the right track and does not need major reevaluation. The legislators also had a favorable opinion on the ability of the system to meet changing economic development needs.

TABLE 2

Response Frequencies for General Attitude Questions

QUESTION	POSITIVE RESPONSES		NEGATIVE RESPONSES	
	NO.	%	NO.	%
1. Higher education in Indiana is on the right track.	61	84.7	11	15.3
2. The higher education system in Indiana needs major re-evaluation and reorganization.	21	28.8	52	71.2
3. The higher education system in Indiana has not met the changing economic development needs.	27	37.0	46	63.0

B. Transfer of Credit

Questions in this area address the opportunity for students to continue their education at a different institution or at a later time. Central to this issue is the decision as to who has the authority to allow transfer of credit to an institution.

Almost unanimously the legislators felt that students should have the ability to demonstrate their proficiency for credit in a course. The majority believe that transfer of credit should not occur between all public institutions of higher education regardless of accreditation, but are split as to whether transfer of credit should be left up to the individual institutions.

TABLE 3

Response Frequencies for Transfer of Credit Questions

QUESTION	POSITIVE RESPONSES		NEGATIVE RESPONSES	
	NO.	%	NO.	%
1. Students should have the opportunity to demonstrate their proficiency for credit when they know the content of a specific college or university course.	67	94.4	4	5.6
2. Public institutions of higher education should accept the transfer of credit from all public institutions of higher education <u>regardless of accreditation differences.</u>	21	29.2	51	70.8
3. Transfer of credit should be left to the individual institutions.	36	50.0	36	50.0

C. Student Fees and Finance

Questions in this area address the issue of funding for the higher education system. More specifically, decisions must be made as to what portion of funding should come from various sources such as state appropriations and student fees, what criteria should be used to determine the appropriate amount of funding, and how future increases in funding should be handled.

The legislators generally felt that student fees should be kept as low as possible even if it means increasing state appropriations at a greater rate. By a small margin legislators believed student fees should increase at a level equal to inflation, but need not reflect the additional investment in higher education if the increase exceeds the rate of inflation. Legislators also felt that student fees should not increase in proportion to the ratio of state appropriations and should not be standardized for statewide universities.

TABLE 4

Response Frequencies for Student Fees and Finance Questions

QUESTION	POSITIVE RESPONSES		NEGATIVE RESPONSES	
	NO.	%	NO.	%
1. Student fees should increase at a level equal to the rate of inflation.	42	57.5	31	42.5
2. Student fees should increase in proportion to the rate of increase in state appropriations.	17	23.6	55	76.4
3. Student fees should be comparable to student fees in other states.	38	53.5	33	46.5
4. Student fees should be kept as low as possible even if it means increasing state appropriations at a greater rate.	47	64.4	26	35.6
5. Student fees should be standardized for all statewide universities.	27	37.0	46	63.6
6. Student fees and tuition should increase to reflect the additional investment in higher education even if the increase exceeds the rate of inflation.	29	40.3	43	59.7

D. Assessment

In order for higher education to be held accountable for state appropriations, there must be a system to measure the effectiveness of teaching in the institutions. This section addresses the issue of how to assess the level of knowledge obtained by students.

Legislators strongly agreed that institutions should administer achievement tests which demonstrate what a student should learn. However, by a small margin the majority were against a competency test for graduation.

TABLE 5

Response Frequencies for Assessment Questions

QUESTION	POSITIVE RESPONSES		NEGATIVE RESPONSES	
	NO.	%	NO.	%
1. Institutions of higher education should administer achievement tests which demonstrate what a student has learned.	53	74.6	18	25.4
2. There should be a statewide test to measure student competency at graduation from college.	30	44.8	37	55.2

E. Access

Higher education facilities must be both readily accessible and cost effective. Questions in this section address how the higher education system should be structured to best make available and deliver a higher education in a cost efficient manner.

Legislators strongly felt that television could provide better access to students and that universities should provide child care for students. The majority also felt a public institution should be within a 45-minute commute for all citizens, and 2-year community colleges and 4-year non-residential campuses should be developed. However, additional residential campuses should not be developed. Legislators also felt that higher education institutions should be responsible for increasing the number of minorities attending and completing college.

TABLE 6

Response Frequencies for Access Questions

QUESTION	POSITIVE RESPONSES		NEGATIVE RESPONSES	
	NO.	%	NO.	%
1. A public college education should be available to any citizen with a maximum 45-minute commute.	42	59.2	29	40.8
2. Television can provide higher education access to students.	66	90.4	7	9.6
3. Community colleges which offer 2-year associate degrees should be developed.	44	60.3	29	39.7
4. Non-residential campuses with 4-year programs and graduate degrees should be developed to meet needs of students who cannot attend residential campuses.	52	71.2	21	28.8
5. Additional residential campuses or universities should be developed.	25	35.7	45	64.3
6. Universities should provide child care for students.	41	56.9	31	43.1
7. Colleges and universities should be responsible for assuring that there is an increase in the number of minorities who attend and complete college.	47	65.3	25	34.7

F. Admissions

Admissions decisions can have effect several areas of higher education, such as the amount of state appropriations, the difficulty of material presented, and the overall value of the education. Questions in this section address the issue of deciding which students should be allowed to attend higher education institutions.

The majority of the legislators felt that not all high school graduates should be admitted to any public college or university, but they were divided as to whether institutions should only admit students demonstrating the ability to be successful. The majority favored allowing parents to purchase future credit hours at fixed rates.

TABLE 7

Response Frequencies for Admissions Questions

QUESTION	POSITIVE RESPONSES		NEGATIVE RESPONSES	
	NO.	%	NO.	%
1. Any student who has graduated from high school should be admitted to any public college or university.	22	30.1	51	69.9
2. Public colleges and universities should only admit students who demonstrate the ability to be academically successful.	38	52.8	34	47.2
3. All Indiana institutions of higher education should offer plans to allow parents and students to purchase future credit hours of instruction at fixed rates.	45	63.4	26	36.6

G. Management

The authority for managing higher education institutions can rest in several areas such as the institutions themselves, state commissions, or state boards of regents. This section addresses the issue of who should manage the institutions and what activities an institution should properly conduct.

Almost unanimously the legislators felt it was the responsibility of the institutional administrators and faculty to manage the university. The majority of the legislators favored a state Commission for Higher Education with the authority to coordinate the offering of academic degrees and programs at the different universities and a state agency to make budget recommendations. However, they

did not favor a state board of regents to manage all the individual institutions. The majority also felt funding support for higher education should be at least equal to that of other states.

The legislators also held the opinion that state government should not regulate intercollegiate athletics or support random drug-testing of athletes. Universities should be allowed to engage in activities that provide unfair competition to free enterprise such as university-run bookstores.

TABLE 8

Response Frequencies for Management Questions

QUESTION	POSITIVE RESPONSES		NEGATIVE RESPONSES	
	NO.	%	NO.	%
1. It is the responsibility of institutional administrators and the faculty to manage the university.	67	91.8	6	8.2
2. There should be a state Commission for Higher Education with authority to coordinate the offering of academic degrees and programs among institutions of higher education.	47	67.1	23	32.9
3. There should be a state board of regents with authority to manage all the individual institutions of higher education.	12	17.1	58	82.9
4. Funding support for higher education should be at least equal to support for higher education in other states.	43	63.2	25	36.8
5. Universities should refrain from activities that provide unfair competition to private enterprise such as university-run bookstores.	25	36.2	44	63.8
6. State government should regulate intercollegiate athletics.	8	11.3	63	88.7
7. State government should support random drug-testing of athletes from state universities.	27	38.6	43	61.4
8. There should be a state agency that makes budget recommendations concerning higher education to the state legislature.	54	75.0	18	25.0

H. Structure of Management

The composition of management organizations can have strong impact on the formation of higher education policy. Questions in this section address the issue of who should have input in managerial decisions through representation in management organizations.

The majority of the legislators held the opinion that faculty should be given representation on boards of trustees of universities and on the Commission for Higher Education. Students should also be represented on the Commission for Higher Education.

TABLE 9

Response Frequencies for Structure of Management Questions

QUESTION	POSITIVE RESPONSES		NEGATIVE RESPONSES	
	NO.	%	NO.	%
1. Faculty should be given designated representation on boards of trustees of universities.	48	67.6	23	32.4
2. Faculty members should be represented on the Commission for Higher Education.	45	64.3	25	35.7
3. Students should be represented on the Commission for Higher Education.	45	63.4	26	36.6

I. Faculty

Central to an institution performing its mission is the role of the faculty. This section addresses what activities the faculty should be engaged in and how the faculty should be handled as employees.

A huge majority of legislators gave teaching priority over research as the most important activity at an institution, as well as feeling the attraction of teaching talent was a growing concern. The majority felt that teaching salaries were not at an appropriate level, but did not favor requiring institutions to enter into collective bargaining with faculty and other employees.

TABLE 10

Response Frequencies for Faculty Questions

QUESTION	POSITIVE RESPONSES		NEGATIVE RESPONSES	
	NO.	%	NO.	%
1. Teaching is the most important activity at an institution of higher education.	70	98.6	1	1.4
2. Research should be given higher priority than teaching in assigning faculty time and workload.	7	9.7	65	90.3
3. Faculty salaries are at appropriate levels.	20	29.0	49	71.0
4. Attracting the best teaching talent into higher education careers is a growing state issue.	63	90.0	7	10.0
5. Higher education institutions should be required to enter into collective bargaining with faculty and other employees.	23	32.4	48	67.6

J. Academic Program

In order to perform its mission, a higher education institution uses numerous academic programs. The questions in this section address the issue of which academic programs are valuable to students and should be implemented by higher education institutions.

The opinions of the legislators were split on whether or not each institution should have a distinct mission, and whether or not the Commission for Higher Education should establish a common general studies curriculum at each public university. The majority of legislators felt that tutoring and special courses in writing or math should be offered to assist the students. Legislators also favored the use of more technology in teaching and the passage of at least one foreign language before graduation. The large majority of legislators did not see a need to restrict the use of laboratory animals by universities.

TABLE 11

Response Frequencies for Academic Program Questions

QUESTION	POSITIVE RESPONSES		NEGATIVE RESPONSES	
	NO.	%	NO.	%
1. Each of the state's public universities should have different and distinct missions.	34	47.9	37	52.1
2. Universities should be using more technology in their teaching mission.	56	84.8	10	15.2
3. Universities should require all students to pass at least one foreign language course before graduating.	49	68.1	23	31.9
4. After admitting students, universities should have tutors and special academic programs which assist the student so he/she will be successful and graduate.	42	60.9	27	39.1
5. The Commission for Higher Education should establish a common general studies curriculum that would be offered at each public university.	32	45.7	38	54.3
6. Universities should restrict their use of laboratory animals in instruction and research.	20	29.0	49	71.0
7. Universities should provide special courses to help students who are under-prepared in either writing and math.	55	76.4	17	23.6

TABLE 12

HIGHER EDUCATION ISSUES BY LEVEL OF POLICY CONSENSUS
ISSUES IN WHICH THERE IS A STRONG CONSENSUS ON POLICY

<u>Question</u>	<u>%</u>	Agree/ <u>Disagree</u>
1. Teaching is the most important activity at an institution of higher education.	98.6	Agree
2. Students should have the opportunity to demonstrate their proficiency for credit when they know the content of a specific college or university course.	94.4	Agree
3. It is the responsibility of institutional administrators and the faculty to manage the university.	91.8	Agree
4. Television can provide higher education access to students.	90.4	Agree
5. Research should be given higher priority than teaching in assigning faculty time and workload.	90.3	Disagree
6. Attracting the best teaching talent into higher education careers is a growing state issue.	90.0	Agree
7. State government should regulate intercollegiate athletics.	88.7	Disagree
8. Universities should be using more technology in their teaching mission.	84.8	Agree
9. Higher education in Indiana is on the right track.	84.7	Agree
10. There should be a state board of regents with authority to manage all the individual institutions of higher education.	82.9	Disagree
11. Student fees should increase in proportion to the rate of increase in state appropriations.	76.4	Disagree
12. Universities should provide special courses to help students who are under-prepared in either writing and math.	76.4	Agree
13. There should be a state agency that makes budget recommendations concerning higher education to the state legislature.	75.0	Agree
14. Institutions of higher education should administer achievement tests which demonstrate what a student has learned.	74.6	Agree
15. Non-residential campuses with 4-year programs and graduate degrees should be developed to meet needs of students who cannot attend residential campuses.	71.2	Agree

16. The higher education system in Indiana needs major re-evaluation and reorganization.	71.2	Disagree
17. Faculty salaries are at appropriate levels.	71.0	Disagree
18. Universities should restrict their use of laboratory animals in instruction and research.	71.0	Disagree
19. Public institutions of higher education should accept the transfer of credit from all public institutions of higher education <u>regardless of accreditation differences.</u>	70.8	Disagree

Note: These are issues where 70% or more of the respondents held a positive (strongly agree or agree) view or negative (strongly disagree or disagree) view.

TABLE 13

HIGHER EDUCATION ISSUES BY LEVEL OF POLICY CONSENSUS

ISSUES IN WHICH THERE IS A MODERATE CONSENSUS ON POLICY

<u>Question</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Agree/ Disagree</u>
1. Any student who has graduated from high school should be admitted to any public college or university.	69.9	Disagree
2. Universities should require all students to pass at least one foreign language course before graduating.	68.1	Agree
3. Higher education institutions should be required to enter into collective bargaining with faculty and other employees.	67.6	Disagree
4. Faculty should be given designated representation on boards of trustees of universities.	67.6	Agree
5. There should be a state Commission for Higher Education with authority to coordinate the offering of academic degrees and programs among institutions of higher education.	67.1	Agree
6. Colleges and universities should be responsible for assuring that there is an increase in the number of minorities who attend and complete college.	65.3	Agree
7. Student fees should be kept as low as possible even if it means increasing state appropriations at a greater rate.	64.4	Agree
8. Additional residential campuses or universities should be developed.	64.3	Disagree
9. Faculty members should be represented on the Commission for Higher Education.	64.3	Agree
10. Universities should refrain from activities that provide unfair competition to private enterprise such as university-run bookstores.	63.8	Disagree
11. Student fees should be standardized for all statewide universities.	63.6	Disagree
12. All Indiana institutions of higher education should offer plans to allow parents and students to purchase future credit hours of instruction at fixed rates.	63.4	Agree
13. Students should be represented on the Commission for Higher Education.	63.4	Agree
14. Funding support for higher education should be at least equal to support for higher education in other states.	63.2	Agree
15. The higher education system in Indiana has not met the changing economic development needs.	63.0	Disagree

- | | | |
|---|------|----------|
| 16. After admitting students, universities should have tutors and special academic programs which assist the student so he/she will be successful and graduate. | 60.9 | Agree |
| 17. State government should support random drug-testing of athletes from state universities. | 61.4 | Disagree |
| 18. Community colleges which offer 2-year associate degrees should be developed. | 60.3 | Agree |

Note: These are issues where 60% or more but less than 70% of the respondents held a positive (strongly agree or agree) view or a negative (strongly disagree or disagree) view.

TABLE 14

HIGHER EDUCATION ISSUES BY LEVEL OF POLICY CONSENSUS

ISSUES WHERE THE POLICY PREFERENCE IS UNCLEAR

<u>Question</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Agree/</u>
		<u>Disagree</u>
1. Transfer of credit should be left to the individual institutions.	50.0	-
2. Each of the state's public universities should have different and distinct missions.	52.1	Disagree
3. Public colleges and universities should only admit students who demonstrate the ability to be academically successful.	52.8	Agree
4. Student fees should be comparable to student fees in other states.	53.5	Agree
5. The Commission for Higher Education should establish a common general studies curriculum that would be offered at each public university.	54.3	Disagree
6. There should be a statewide test to measure student competency at graduation from college.	55.2	Disagree
7. Universities should provide child care for students.	56.9	Agree
8. Student fees should increase at a level equal to the rate of inflation.	57.5	Agree
9. A public college education should be available to any citizen with a maximum 45-minute commute.	59.2	Agree
10. Student fees and tuition should increase to reflect the additional investment in higher education even if the increase exceeds the rate of inflation.	59.7	Disagree

Note: These are issues where less than 60% of the respondents held a positive (strongly agree or agree) view or negative (strongly disagree or disagree) view.

IV. Impact of Age on Opinions

The response data was analyzed in an attempt to identify on which issues there was a relationship between age and legislator opinions on higher education. The two categories of age, under 45 and 45 and older, were cross-tabbed with each question. For each question the Kendall's Tau statistic was computed to indicate the strength of any relationship between legislator age and response to the questions. A positive value for Kendall's Tau indicates the younger legislators were more likely to respond positively to that question, where as a negative Kendall's Tau indicates older legislators were more likely to respond positively.

In questions with an absolute value of Kendall's Tau of .09 or greater there is a relationship between age and legislator opinion, with the larger the absolute value of Kendall's Tau the greater the strength of the relationship. The questions in each issue category were evaluated as to the significance of the relationship between age and opinion on higher education. The following criteria were used in evaluating the questions: 1) the Kendall's Tau value for the strength of the relationship, 2) the strength of agreement on that question, 3) the relationship between or pattern of the questions in the issue category.

The following are the questions grouped by issue category in which a possible significant relationship between age and legislator opinion existed.

A. GENERAL

<u>Question</u>	<u>Kendall's Tau Value</u>
Higher education in Indiana is on the right track. track.	-.15217

There does not appear to be any significant relationship between age and opinion on this issue. Although the value of Kendall Tau indicated a possible relationship, the consensus on this question was high with both age groups responding positively. Also, no possible relationship was indicated in the two other questions on the general opinion towards higher education.

B. TRANSFER OF CREDIT

<u>Question</u>	<u>Kendall's Tau Value</u>
Transfer of credit should be left to the individual institutions.	-.21390

There is a significant relationship between age and opinion, with younger legislators being less likely than older legislators to favor leaving the transfer of credit to individual institutions. The consensus on this issue was unclear overall, but the majority of young legislators responded negatively while the majority of older legislators responded positively. This question appears to address an isolated issue of difference in the area of transfer of credit.

C. STUDENT FEES AND FINANCE

<u>Question</u>	<u>Kendall's Tau Value</u>
Student fees should increase at a level equal to the rate of inflation.	-.24992
Student fees should be kept as low as possible even if it means increasing state appropriations at a greater rate.	.09349
Student fees and tuition should increase to reflect the additional investment in higher education even if the increase exceeds the rate of inflation.	-.19318

The legislators do not have a strong consensus on any of the above questions. An unclear consensus exists on student fees increasing at a level equal to the rate of inflation or to reflect additional investment in higher education, and a moderate consensus exists on keeping student fees as low as possible even if the increase exceeds the rate of inflation. Even though none of the Kendall's Tau value are extremely high, these three questions together indicate a preference by younger legislators to keep student fees low.

D. ASSESSMENT

<u>Question</u>	<u>Kendall's Tau Value</u>
Institutions of higher education should administer achievement tests which demonstrate what a student has learned.	-.28283
There should be a statewide test to measure student competency at graduation from college.	-.19384

There is strong consensus overall on the question of achievement tests, but it is an unclear issue to younger

legislators. On the issue of competency tests there is a unclear consensus overall and negative consensus among younger legislators. Together these questions indicate younger legislators are much less likely than older legislators to favor the use of achievement and competency tests.

E. ACCESS

<u>Question</u>	<u>Kendall's Tau Value</u>
Television can provide higher education access to students.	.10418
Universities should provide child care for students.	.16352
Colleges and universities should be responsible for assuring that there is an increase in the number of minorities who attend and complete college.	.33963

There is significant relationship on the child care issue, with younger legislators being much more likely than older legislators to favor the use of child care to provide access. Although the Kendall's Tau value is not extremely high on this issue, the consensus of young legislators is highly positive while the overall consensus is unclear. There is also a strong relationship on the issue of minorities with younger legislators much more likely than older legislators to respond positively to this issue. The Kendall's Tau value is very high and young legislators almost unanimously responded positively while the overall consensus was moderate.

Opinion on the question of using television to provide access is not effected significantly by legislator age because the Kendall's Tau value is fairly weak and the overall consensus is strongly positive. It is important to note there appears to be no significant relationship between age and opinion on the use of different types of campuses as a means of access.

F. ADMISSIONS

<u>Question</u>	<u>Kendall's Tau Value</u>
Any student who has graduated from high school should be admitted to any public college or university.	.11022

There does not appear to be a significant relationship between age and opinion on admissions issues. The above question does not have a very strong relationship indicated by the Kendall's Tau value and has a moderate consensus. There is also no relationship between the admissions question that would indicate a significant relationship between age and opinion on admissions issues.

G. MANAGEMENT

<u>Question</u>	<u>Kendall's Tau Value</u>
Funding support for higher education should be at least equal to support for higher education in other states.	-.17719
State government should support random drug-testing of athletes from state universities.	-.24130

There should be a state agency that makes budget recommendations concerning higher education to the state legislature.

-.19406

In two unrelated questions, a relationship between age and opinion exists. Younger legislators are less likely than older legislators to believe funding should be equal to that of other states. There is a moderate consensus overall on this issue, but the consensus of younger legislators is unclear. Younger legislators are also less likely than older legislators to support random drug-testing. The overall consensus is moderate, but the consensus among younger legislators is strongly against the testing.

Although the Kendall Tau value indicates a possible relationship, there appears to be no relationship between age and opinion on the use of a state agency to make budget recommendations. The overall consensus on this issue is strongly positive.

H. STRUCTURE OF MANAGEMENT

<u>Question</u>	<u>Kendall's Tau Value</u>
Faculty should be given designated representation on boards of trustees of universities.	.09895
Faculty members should be represented on the Commission for Higher Education.	.14142
Students should be represented on the Commission for Higher Education.	.21603

All three of the questions relating to structure of management have a moderate consensus and a Kendall Tau value

indicating some relationship between age and opinion. Together these questions indicate a strong relationship between age and opinion on structure of management issues, with younger legislators being much more likely than older legislators to favor faculty and student representation in management organizations.

I. FACULTY

<u>Question</u>	<u>Kendall's Tau Value</u>
Teaching is the most important activity at an institution of higher education.	-.18443
Research should be given higher priority than teaching in assigning faculty time and workload.	.09884
Attracting the best teaching talent into higher education careers is a growing state issue.	.11430
Higher education institutions should be required to enter into collective bargaining with faculty and other employees.	.21084

There appears to be no relationship between age and opinion on the priority of teaching versus research. The first two questions addressing this issue have Kendall Tau values indicating a relationship, but the strong consensus on these questions makes any relationship insignificant. No significant relationship exists for the same reason in the related question addressing the ability to attract teaching talent.

In an isolated issue a significant relationship between age and opinion exists, with younger legislators more likely

than older legislators to believe institutions should be required to enter into collective bargaining. The older legislators are strongly against this issue, while the opinion of the younger legislators is unclear.

J. ACADEMIC PROGRAM

<u>Question</u>	<u>Kendall's Tau Value</u>
Universities should be using more technology in their teaching mission.	-.18112
After admitting students, universities should have tutors and special academic programs which assist the student so he/she will be successful and graduate.	.27218
The Commission for Higher Education should establish a common general studies curriculum that would be offered at each public university.	-.19951
Universities should restrict their use of laboratory animals in instruction and research.	.10675

In two academic program issues there are significant relationships between age and opinion. Younger legislators are more likely than older legislators to favor the use of tutors and special academic programs, but less likely to favor a common general studies curriculum at all public universities. The consensus among younger legislators was strongly positive towards tutors and academic programs, while the consensus among older legislators was unclear. The younger consensus was strongly against the use of a common general studies curriculum, while the older consensus was slightly favorable.

There was not a significant relationship relating to the use of technology in teaching because the responses from both the younger and older legislators were strongly positive. There was no significant relationship relating to the use of laboratory animals because the overall consensus was strong and the Kendall's Tau value was relatively low.

V. Relationship Between Age and Political Party

For each of the twenty-five questions in which a possible relationship between age and opinion existed, the Kendall's Tau value was computed controlling for political party. The Kendall's Tau value for each party showed the strength of any relationship between age and opinion within that party. The lower the value of Kendall's Tau the greater the alignment of opinions between the older and younger members of the party.

In fifteen of the twenty-five questions the Republican Kendall's Tau value was greater than the Democratic Kendall's Tau value. In six questions the Democratic Kendall's Tau value was greater than the Republican Kendall's Tau value, and in four questions there was an insignificant difference between the parties. There was no pattern among the six questions that the Democrats showed less unity of opinion than the Republicans.

In a large majority of questions the Republican Kendall's Tau value exceeded the Democratic Kendall's Tau value. For this reason it can be concluded that younger Republican legislators are much more likely than younger Democratic legislators to hold a different opinion than the older legislators of their party. Only on isolated issues were younger Democratic legislators more likely than younger Republican legislators to hold a different opinion than the older legislators of their party.

TABLE 15

Issues In Which Younger Republicans Are More Likely than Younger
Democrats to Hold an Opinion Different than Older Party Members

<u>Question</u>	Kendall's Tau	
	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Democrats</u>
Higher education in Indiana is on the right track.	-.34483	.00939
Transfer of credit should be left to the individual institutions.	-.32417	-.11195
Student fees should increase at a level equal to the rate of inflation.	-.31537	-.22061
Student fees should be kept as low as possible even if it means increasing state appropriations at a greater rate.	.17408	.00939
Student fees and tuition should increase to reflect the additional investment in higher education even if the increase exceeds the rate of inflation.	-.29374	-.09467
Institutions of higher education should administer achievement tests which demonstrate what a student has learned.	-.35806	-.19795
Television can provide higher education access to students.	.18687	.03536
Universities should provide child care for students.	.24261	.10768
Colleges and universities should be responsible for assuring that there is an increase in the number of minorities who attend and complete college.	.48103	.20588
State government should support random drug-testing of athletes from state universities.	-.30844	-.20851
Teaching is the most important activity at an institution of higher education.	-.25756	.00000
Research should be given higher priority than teaching in assigning faculty time and workload.	.36927	-.09474
Attracting the best teaching talent into higher education careers is a growing state issue.	.20000	.04286
Universities should be using more technology in their teaching mission.	-.29560	-.02058
After admitting students, universities should have tutors and special academic programs which assist the student so he/she will be successful and graduate.	.45968	.03058

TABLE 16

Issues In Which Younger Democrats Are More Likely than Younger
 Republicans to Hold an Opinion Different than Older Party Members

<u>Question</u>	Kendall's Tau	
	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Democrats</u>
Funding support for higher education should be at least equal to support for higher education in other states.	-.10847	-.36706
There should be a state agency that makes budget recommendations concerning higher education to the state legislature.	-.15128	-.27307
Faculty members should be represented on the Commission for Higher Education.	.00000	.31083
Students should be represented on the Commission for Higher Education.	.13821	.31083
The Commission for Higher Education should establish a common general studies curriculum that would be offered at each public university.	-.02097	-.41580
Universities should restrict their use of laboratory animals in instruction and research.	.01680	.22121

TABLE 17

Issues In Which There Is An Insignificant Difference
In The Age Group Unity of the Two Parties

<u>Question</u>	<u>Kendall's Tau</u>	
	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Democrats</u>
There should be a statewide test to measure student competency at graduation from college.	-.16432	-.21023
Any student who has graduated from high school should be admitted to any public college or university.	.10438	.10551
Faculty should be given designated representation on boards of trustees of universities.	.10531	.09474
Higher education institutions should be required to enter into collective bargaining with faculty and other employees.	.24350	.24371

Note: These are issues in which the difference between the value for each party is less than .1.

VI. Conclusion

The need for improvement in our nation's education system is becoming more evident as we face the advancement of foreign economies, the deteriorating welfare system, and a number of other social problems impacted by education. This research successfully isolated several higher education policy issues on which legislative opinion is impacted by age, as well as determining that younger Republican legislators were more likely than younger Democratic legislators to differ in opinion with older legislators in their party. The difference in the opinions of younger and older legislators could be an indication of the direction higher education will take as it strives to improve.

The improvement of the education system will not occur without increased financial commitment to all levels of the education system, including higher education. Younger legislators are much more likely than older legislators to attempt to keep students fees low. If student fees are kept low in the future, state appropriations will have to be increased to meet the rising costs of higher education. The views of younger legislators towards higher education finance will be important as higher education competes with drug abuse, AIDS, and other high visibility issues for state appropriations.

The final measure of the performance of the higher education system is the quality of the students it produces.

In order to improve the higher education system, the system must be held accountable for its output. Younger legislators are much less likely than older legislators to favor the use of standardized tests, such as competency and achievement tests, to assess the ability of students. Younger legislators are also against the use of a common general studies curriculum at all public universities and allowing individual institutions to determine transfer of credit. However, younger legislators are more likely than older legislators to favor the use of tutors and special programs to improve the education of the students. These opinions may be important in the future if academic programs are to be improved and the accountability of higher education institutions increased.

If higher education is to improve, policy changes may have to be made. Younger legislators are more likely than older legislators to favor faculty and student representation on management organizations. This opinion may be important in determining who shall have input in higher education policy decisions.

The opinions of younger legislators also differ from older legislators on how higher education institutions should deal with several issues emerging in all of society. Younger legislators are more likely than older legislators to favor the use of child care and minority advancement programs to improve access. The younger legislators are less likely than older legislators to favor state government support of the

drug-testing of athletes at public universities. These opinions will be important as higher education, like all areas of society, must address these issues.

Education plays a critical role in determining the standard of living in a society. The higher education system, as part of the entire education system, must confront several issues in the future if it is to improve and provide a better quality of life. Hopefully, this research gives some insight into how the next generation of legislators will deal with the emerging issues in higher education policy.

HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY SURVEY

1. How do you feel the people in your legislative district would rate the following issues in terms of importance to the future of Indiana? (Rating 1 to 10 with 1 being top priority.)

- _____ a) holding the line on or reducing taxes
 _____ b) roads and highways
 _____ c) mental health
 _____ d) K-12 education
 _____ e) corruption in state government
 _____ f) environmental issues
 _____ g) higher education
 _____ h) creating new jobs & economic development
 _____ i) creating a state-run lottery
 _____ j) other _____

2. How would you as a legislator rate the following issues in terms of importance to the future of Indiana? (Rating 1 to 10 with 1 being top priority.)

- _____ a) holding the line on or reducing taxes
 _____ b) roads and highways
 _____ c) mental health
 _____ d) K-12 education
 _____ e) corruption in state government
 _____ f) environmental issues
 _____ g) higher education
 _____ h) creating new jobs & economic development
 _____ i) creating a state-run lottery
 _____ j) other _____

For each of the statements below indicate if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree.

I. GENERAL

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. Higher education in Indiana is on the right track.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. The higher education system in Indiana needs major re-evaluation and reorganization.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. The higher education system in Indiana has not met the changing economic development needs.	_____	_____	_____	_____

II. TRANSFER OF CREDIT

1. Students should have the opportunity to demonstrate their proficiency for credit when they know the content of a specific college or university course.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Public institutions of higher education should accept the transfer of credit from all public institutions of higher education <u>regardless of accreditation differences.</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Transfer of credit issues should be left to individual institutions.	_____	_____	_____	_____

III. STUDENT FEES AND FINANCE

1. Student fees should increase at a level equal to the rate of inflation (CPI).	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Student fees should increase in proportion to the rate of increase in state appropriations.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Student fees should be comparable to student fees in other states.	_____	_____	_____	_____

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
4. Funding support for higher education should be at least equal to support for higher education in other states.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Universities should refrain from activities that provide unfair competition to private enterprise such as university-run bookstores.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. State government should regulate intercollegiate athletics.	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. State government should require random drug-testing of athletes from state universities.	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. There should be a state agency that makes budget recommendations concerning higher education to the state legislature.	_____	_____	_____	_____

VIII. STRUCTURE OF MANAGEMENT

1. There should be a faculty member appointed to the boards of trustees of universities.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. There should be a faculty member appointed to the Commission for Higher Education.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. There should be a student appointed to the Commission for Higher Education.	_____	_____	_____	_____

IX. FACULTY

1. Teaching is the most important activity at an institution of higher education.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Research should be given a higher priority than teaching in assigning faculty time and workload.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Faculty salaries are at appropriate levels.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Attracting the best teaching talent into higher education careers is a growing state issue.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Higher education institutions should be required to enter into collective bargaining with faculty and other employees.	_____	_____	_____	_____

X. ACADEMIC PROGRAM

1. Each of the state's public universities should have different and distinct missions.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Universities should be using more technology in their teaching mission.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Universities should require all students to pass at least one foreign language course before graduating.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. After admitting students, universities should have tutors and special academic programs which assist the student so he/she will be successful and graduate.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. The Commission for Higher Education should establish a common general studies curriculum that would be offered at each public university.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Universities should restrict their use of laboratory animals in instruction and research.	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Universities should provide special courses to help students who are underprepared in either writing or math.	_____	_____	_____	_____

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
4. Student fees should be kept as low as possible even if it means increasing state appropriations at a greater rate.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Student fees should be standardized for all statewide universities.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Student fees and tuition should increase to reflect the additional investment in higher education even if the increase exceeds the rate of inflation.	_____	_____	_____	_____

IV. ASSESSMENT

1. Institutions of higher education should administer achievement tests which demonstrate what a student has learned.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. There should be a statewide test to measure student competency at graduation from college.	_____	_____	_____	_____

V. ACCESS

1. A public college education should be available to any citizen with a maximum 45-minute commute.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Television can provide higher education access to students.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Community colleges which offer 2-year associate degrees should be developed.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Non-residential campuses with 4-year programs and graduate degrees should be developed to meet needs of students who cannot attend residential campuses.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Additional residential campuses or universities should be developed.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Universities should provide child care for students.	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Colleges and universities should be responsible for assuring that there is an increase in the number of minorities who attend and successfully complete college.	_____	_____	_____	_____

VI. ADMISSIONS

1. Any student who has graduated from high school should be admitted to any public college or university.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Public colleges and universities should only admit students who demonstrate the ability to be academically successful.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. All Indiana institutions of higher education should offer plans to allow parents and students to purchase future credit hours of instruction at fixed rates.	_____	_____	_____	_____

VII. MANAGEMENT

1. It is the responsibility of institutional administrators and the faculty to manage the university.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. There should be a state Commission for Higher Education with authority to coordinate the offering of academic degrees and programs among institutions of higher education.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. There should be a state board of regents with authority to manage all the individual institutions of higher education.	_____	_____	_____	_____

XI. OTHER

1. Of the following, rank the measures that should be used to compare higher education among the states (1=most preferred, 6=least preferred):

- ☐ a) average student fees and tuition
☐ b) average faculty salaries
☐ c) total institutional (student fees & state appropriations) expenditures per student
☐ d) only state appropriations per student
☐ e) number of graduates per 1000 population
☐ f) percent of the population attending college

2. The state goal in comparing higher education in the state to other states should be: (choose one)

- ☐ a) to be in the top 10%
☐ b) to be in the top 25%
☐ c) to be in the top 50%
☐ d) to be in the top 75%

3. What is the most important issue confronting the state in higher education today?
- _____

4. The appropriate share of the cost of higher education for students and the state to pay is: (choose one)

- | | <u>State</u> | <u>Student</u> |
|-----------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a) | 50% | 50% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> b) | 66 | 33 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> c) | 75 | 25 |

XI. PROFILE INFORMATION

Race: ☐ white ☐ black
 Age: ☐ under 45 ☐ 45-60 ☐ 60 and above
 Party: ☐ Democrat ☐ Republican
 Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Years of legislative service, as of January 1989

☐ 0-3 yrs ☐ 4-7 yrs ☐ 8+

Committee experience: (Check appropriate items)

☐ Ways/Means or Finance ☐ Education

College Education:

☐ None ☐ Attended College ☐ College Graduate ☐ Post-grad

Any public institution of higher education in district other than IVTC?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Urban nature of home county (by population):

- ☐ Less than 50,000
☐ 50,000 to 100,000
☐ 100,000 to 250,000
☐ More than 250,000

Occupation: _____

THANKS FOR YOUR HELP AND COOPERATION. YOUR ASSISTANCE HAS BEEN VERY MUCH APPRECIATED.

Please return to:

Rick Hall
 AD 113
 Ball State University
 Muncie, IN 47306

FOOTNOTES

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²Eulare, Heinz and Quinley, Harold. "Legislators and Academicians," Goodall, Leonard E., When Colleges Lobby States The Higher Education/State Government Connection, American Association of State Colleges and Universities, 1987, p. 89.

³Middleton, Lorenzo. "Who Should Set State Policy in an Era of Retrenchment?" Chronicle of Higher Education, June 23, 1980, p. 7.

⁴Goodall, Leonard E. When Colleges Lobby States The Higher Education/State Government Connection, American Association of State Colleges and Universities, 1987, p. 99.

⁵The following are studies of socioeconomic and political variables in policy formation:

- A. Hofferbert, Richard I. "The Relation Between Public Policy and Some Structural and Environmental Variables in American States," American Political Science Review, March, 1966, pp. 73-82.
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⁶Brady, David and Schmidhauser, John and Berg, Larry. "House Lawyers Support for the Supreme Court," Journal of Politics, August, 1973, pp. 724-729.

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⁷Dyer, James A., "Do Lawyers Vote Differently: A Study of Voting on No-Fault Insurance," Journal of Politics, May, 1976, pp. 452-456.

⁸Ehrenhalt, Alan, "The 'Juniority' System in Congress." Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, March 21, 1981, p. 535.

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